

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AGR-05 STR-04 L-03 AID-05

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

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E.O 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD

SUBJECT: JAMAICAN RICE QUOTA

1. WASHINGTON REPS OF AMERICAN RICE MILLERS HAVE INFORMED STATE AND AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENTS THAT U.S. RICE MILLERS HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY JAMAICAN EMBASSY FEBRUARY 17. EMBASSY TOLD MILLERS THAT GOJ FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS NEGOTIATING WITH JAMAICAN COMMERCE MINISTRY TO OBTAIN A QUOTA FOR U.S. RICE IN RESPONSE TO USG REPRESENTATIONS MADE IN KINGSTON AND WASHINGTON. INDUSTRY REP ALSO SAID UNCLE BEN'S RICE CO. WAS APPROACHED BY JAMAICAN EMBASSY AND ASKED FOR PRICE QUOTES ON ONE AND TWO POUND BOXES.

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2. U.S. INDUSTRY IS ENCOURAGED BY ABOVE, BUT ALSO CONCERNED

THAT THIS MAY ONLY BE DELAYING TACTIC. INDUSTRY HAS 301 COMPLAINT READY AND SAYS IT WILL BE FILED UNLESS REASONABLE OFFER RECEIVED IN NEAR FUTURE. IT DEFINED REASONABLE IN TERMS OF GIVING U.S. TEN PERCENT OF JAMAICAN MARKET, OR FOUR TO SIX THOUSAND METRIC TONS PER YEAR.

3. WE ARE LIKEWISE HOPEFUL THAT MOVEMENT HAS BEGUN IN EARNEST TOWARD A DEFUSING OF PROBLEM THROUGH REASONABLE GOJ ACTION. OUR MAIN CONCERN IS THAT THE GOJ MIGHT DECIDE ON

AN AMOUNT WHICH WOULD BE INSUFFICIENT TO SATISFY U.S. INTERESTS AND PREVENT 301 ACTION.

4. INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON ARE INFORMING JAMAICAN EMBASSY THAT INDUSTRY WISHES TO OBTAIN A MINIMUM OF TEN PERCENT OF JAMAICAN MARKET OR 4-6,000 METRIC TONS PER YEAR. DEPARTMENT HAS ALSO PASSED THIS INFORMATION TO JAMAICAN EMBASSY. REQUEST YOU INFORM GOJ, MAKING IT CLEAR YOU ARE REPORTING ON INDUSTRY'S APPROACH, NOT SUPPORTING THE PROPOSAL IN ITS SPECIFICS, THOUGH OF COURSE USG WOULD BE PLEASED TO SEE THE MATTER SETTLED AND 301 ACTION AVOIDED. REPORT OF REACTION REQUESTED. KISSINGER

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